

For Immediate Release

Contact – Larry McIntyre, 630-417-0280 or bigmac1965@sbcglobal.net

MUDDY WATERS HONORED WITH HISTORICAL EXHIBIT AND MUSICAL TRIBUTE IN WESTMONT

MORGANFIELD FAMILY IN ATTENDANCE

FOR STREET DEDICATION AND DEBUT OF HISTORICAL EXHIBIT

Not everybody knows it, but the Godfather of the Blues lived the last 10 years of his life, and the most successful years of his career, in Westmont, Illinois. In the early 70's, Muddy "McKinley Morganfield" Waters wanted to move out of Chicago and specifically chose Westmont for he and his family.

"Muddy was so fond of Westmont," says Waters' former manager Scott Cameron. "Westmont was his town. He talked about it wherever he toured." Longtime Muddy guitarist Bob Margolin says that Muddy referred to the area as "God's Country".

And Muddy often brought the tour back to Westmont. Johnny Winter, who produced several of Waters' albums, often visited Muddy at his home. Margolin used to spend the night on Muddy's couch. Eric Clapton even visited Westmont to serve as the best man when Muddy was married at his home. And every time The Rolling Stones, who named themselves after a Muddy Waters song, came to Chicago, they would send a limo out to Westmont trying to court Muddy into the city for a jam.

During the past decade, Westmont has indirectly paid tribute to Waters by featuring blues music on the final night of their annual Taste of Westmont summer festival. This year, they're making it official.

On Thursday, July 7, 10am, at One South Cass Avenue, there was a VIP/Media debut of the new Muddy Waters Historical Exhibit and the official re-dedication of Cass Avenue as Honorary Muddy Waters Way. The exhibit features many one-of-a-kind artifacts on loan from Scott Cameron and the Muddy Waters Estate including rare photos, musical recordings, several of Muddy's outfits, and even one of Muddy's Grammy Awards. The exhibit was opened to the public July 8, 9 and 10, 4-7 p.m. for The Taste of Westmont. Currently, the exhibit is open Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 9am-3pm.

"Mud would be very proud," says Marva Morganfield, Muddy's widow. "He would be overjoyed." Marva traveled from Florida to take part in the tribute.

Sunday, July 10, 2005 was proclaimed "Muddy Waters Blues Night" at the Taste of Westmont. Live blues music was played throughout the day and concluded with a performance by a Muddy Waters Tribute Band featuring former members of Muddy's band including John Primer and Rick Kreher. Special guests included Smokey Smothers and Arthur Duncan. The event was attended by more than 5000 people.

"We're very excited about this event!" says Larry McIntyre, Westmont Special Events Corporation (WSEC) President. "Muddy Waters is a true legend in American music and we could not be more proud to honor his name, his music and his memory."

The WSEC is also working to create a documentary featuring Waters' life and music. "We are scheduled to interview many people including musicians, friends, family and more," says McIntyre. The Westmont Historical Society encourages anyone who would like to share their Muddy Waters stories, pictures and memorabilia, to please contact the WSEC at 630-417-0280.

For more information regarding The Muddy Waters Tribute, call 630-829-WEST or email specialevents@westmont.il.gov. You can also check out our website at www.westmont.il.gov and click on the special events link.